Export of Textile Machinery to Pakistan

3860. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that All Pakistan Textile Mills Association has desired to import textile machinery from India; and

(b) if so, the action proposed to take up the matter with the Pakistan Government for allowing textile manufacturers in Pakistan to freely import such machinery from India ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY: (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As signatories to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) agreement, both India and Pakistan are obliged to give Most Favoured Nation (MFN) Treatment to each other. India has already given MFN status to Pakistan but Pakistan has not so far reciprocated. India has taken up the issue of MFN status on many earlier occasions but this has not elicited a positive response from Pakistan. Imports by Pakistan from India are limited to items specified in a list brought out by Pakistan. Textile machinery is not included in the list of items importable from India during 2001 -2002.

Setting-up of the Specialised Content Bureau

3861. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to set up a specialised Content Bureau under the Autonomous Communications Commission of India (CCI), to police the net and electronic media with powers to censor content;

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when, the Bureau is likely to be set up; and

(c) the details of action Government propose to take against Internet service providers who fail to assist the Bureau in the interception of objectionable matter/contents etc.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) In pursuance of the New Telecom Policy-99, it is proposed to prepare a new comprehensive statute to replace the Indian Telegraph Act 1885 keeping in view the rapid convergence of telecom, computers,

television and electronics. The matter formed a specific term of reference of the Group of telecom and IT Convergence set up under the chairmanship of Finance Minister. The Group has now submitted its Report alongwith the suggested legislation which is presently under consideration of the Government.

Manufacturing of Cellular Hand-sets

3862. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of

COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that our entire requirement of cellular hand-sets is presently met by import;

(b) if so, whether any steps have been taken to create infrastructure for manufacture of such sets indigenously;

(c) if so, the latest position thereon; and

(d) the anticipated requirement of hand-sets in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Manufacturing of the telecom equipment including Cellular hand-sets has been de-licensed, and therefore, companies are free to set up manufacturing units for the Cellular hand-sets. Furthermore, 100% FDI is allowed in manufacturing sector. Manufacturing of cellular hand-sets requires high volumes, of the order 1-2 million per annum, for economically viable capacities. Though Cellular Mobile phone is growing annually at the rate of over 100%, adding over 2,00,000 subscribers per month, volumes have not yet reached a level which encourage setting up of indigenous base. However, some companies like ITI, HTL and M/s. Global Marketing and Distribution Company have shown interest in setting up the infrastructure for manufacture of such sets indigenously.

In order to encourage the manufacture of the telecom equipment including cellular phones indigenously, Government has already reduced the basic customs duty on the parts of cellular phones to 5%.

(d) As the cellular subscribers are growing at the rate of 2,00,000 per month approximately, it is expected that the requirement of the cellular hand-sets would also grow at the same rate.